

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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December 8, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On December 3, 2011, in your weekly address to the nation, you said, “we’ve been fighting to pass a series of jobs bills through Congress – bills that independent economists say will create more jobs and grow the economy even faster. Because now is the time to step on the gas, not slam on the brakes.” You went on to say, “last year, both parties came together to cut payroll taxes for the typical middle-class family by about \$1,000. But that tax cut is set to expire at the end of this month.... We can’t let that happen.”

You can imagine our surprise when we read your most recent comments suggesting you would veto a bill to achieve both goals outlined in your address: creating jobs and extending the current payroll tax rates. We trust the publicly reported transcripts are accurate, and you actually did say, “any effort to tie Keystone to the payroll tax cut, I will reject. So everybody can be on notice.”

Middle class families are now on notice that you plan to reject a payroll tax extension if it is linked to a job-creating private-sector construction project, the Keystone XL pipeline. Labor unions that have signed on to build and support this thoroughly studied and environmentally sound pipeline are now on notice that you plan to say no to their jobs. And out-of-work Americans are now also on notice that you plan to deny an extension of unemployment benefits because they may be linked to this same proposal to address America’s energy needs and create new jobs, which would possibly give them an opportunity to re-enter the workforce.

We respectfully request you reconsider your plans to deny working Americans protection from a large payroll tax increase and deny millions of jobless Americans further unemployment benefits in order to prevent tens of thousands of Americans from securing good-paying union jobs building a pipeline that will improve our energy security at no cost to the government.

The Keystone XL project is already long overdue. Most pipeline projects approved under the process that you are applying to the Keystone XL pipeline are considered for less than two years before they receive the final green light. Keystone has waited three years and counting.

In August 2011 the State Department published a Final Environmental Impact Statement that identified the permitting and construction of the Keystone XL pipeline as the agency's "preferred" option. After three years of study and the completion of environmental findings by the State Department, your recent decision to delay a final decision on the pipeline until after the November 2012 presidential election is unjustifiable, and a direct contradiction of statements your administration made earlier this year committing to a final decision by the end of 2011.

This project has been thoroughly reviewed and the environmental concerns have been addressed. Even the Nebraska route modification is being worked out, and our House legislation honors the new Nebraska law that sets out a pathway for swiftly resolving that question.

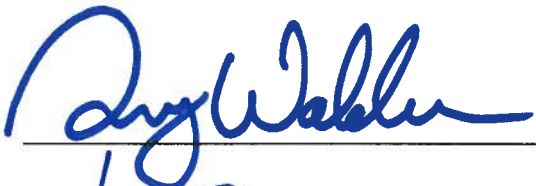
Mr. President, America can't wait for the jobs and energy security that will come with construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. Waiting for the election to pass is too long to keep tens of thousands of workers on the bench, so we are prepared to move forward with legislation that will require you to make a decision in a reasonable and timely manner.

Our efforts in coming days will focus on getting that legislation to your desk before Christmas. We hope you will say yes to the payroll tax extension and continued unemployment benefits. We hope you will say yes to jobs.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton  
Chairman



Mig Rompo Mary Bono Mack

Harsha Blackman Jay M

Pete Olson Brett Barthol

Gregg Harper Tim Murphy

Joyce Pitts Sue Myrick

Mike Rogers Leonard Lance

Steve Scalise John S

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Bob E. J. Bill Cassidy

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